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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 L-03 EUR-12 ICA-20
/088 W
----------082623 061321Z /46
R 060902Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7769
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1412

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY
DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS AFL-CIO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, SF, ILO
SUBJECT: S.A. LOBBYING AT ILO

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1316

THE FOLLOWING REPORT FROM GENEVA ON SOUTH AFRICAN LOBBYING OBJECTIVES AT THE ILO CONVENTION APPEARED IN THE JUNE 5 EDITION OF THE STAR: QUOTE:

WITH THE START OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION'S (ILO) CRUCIAL ANNUAL MEETING LESS THAN THREE DAYS AWAY, SOUTH AFRICA'S EMPLOYER AND TRADES UNION REPRESENTATIVES HERE HAVE STARTED INTENSIVE LOBBYING OF MEMBER NATIONS.

SOUTH AFRICA HAS TWO DELEGATIONS IN GENEVA - THE
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TRADE UNIONISTS LED BY TUCSA PRESIDENT MR. RONNIE WEBB AND GENERAL SECRETARY MR. ARTHUR GROBBELAAR, AND THE EMPLOYER' REPRESENTATIVES HEADED BY CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYER' CONSULATATIVE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AFFAIRS, MR. CHRIS DUTOIT.

BOTH DELEGATIONS SAY THEIR MAIN TASK HERE IS TO

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PUT ACROSS THE MESSAGE THAT THE LABOR SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA IS CHANGING FOR THE BETTER.

ALTHOUGH AN ILO REPORT ON SOUTH AFRICA HAS HIT AT APARTHEID, ESPECIALLY IN THE EMPLOYMENT FIELD, IT HAS ALSO ADMITTED THAT POSITIVE PROPOSALS FOR RACIAL REFORM " ARE BEING MADE ON A MORE EXTENSIVE BASIS THAN EVER BEFORE".

THE REPORT, PREPARED BY ILO DIRECTOR MR. FRANCIS BLANCHARD, WILL BE DEBATED DURING THE LATTER HALF OF THE CONFERENCE, PROBABLY NEXT WEEK.

BUT THE REPORT, ADMITTING THAT THERE IS GROWING DEMAND FROM WITHIN THE REPUBLIC FOR " REAL CHANGE" IS GRIST TO THE MILL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOBBYISTS HERE.

THIS, COUPLED WITH RECENT HINTS BY THE MINISTER OF LABOR, MR. S.P. BOTHA, THAT BLACK TRADE UNIONS MAY SOON BE RECOGNIZED, HAS MADE THE DELEGATIONS HERE MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

MUCH WILL DEPEND HOWEVER ON THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO THE IMPENDING REPORTS OF THE OFFICIAL INQUIRY INTO SOUTH AFRICA'S LABOR LAWS AND INTO THE UTILIZATION OF MANPOWER.
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BUT THESE REPORTS COULD COME TOO LATE TO INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDE OF THE MAJORITY AT THE ILO IN THIS, THE ANTI-APARTHEID YEAR CALLED BY THE POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS. UNQUOTE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LOBBYING, INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JOHANN01412
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780236-0118
Format: TEL
From: JOHANNESBURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780693/aaaadbnp.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 76156e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 JOHANNESBURG 1316
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2479756
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: S.A. LOBBYING AT ILO
TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, SOPN, SF, ILO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/76156e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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